

**REMARKS**

Claims 1-12 are currently pending in the present application. Claim 1 has been amended. Claims 13-20 are new. No new matter has been added.

**Claim Rejections – 35 USC §102:**

Claims 1, 3, 6, 7, 11, and 12 are rejected under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by the 2001 Ford Mustang Convertible (the “Ford Mustang”).

With respect to claim 1, the Examiner states that the Ford Mustang “has a roof which includes, in the closed state, a section of a transversely running roof strut on an area directly adjacent to the windshield frame that protrudes farther into the passenger compartment than the roof area lying behind it...” The Examiner further states that “[e]ach recess is covered by a latch-actuating handle...” and “[t]he handle meets the limitation of a deformable covering in that the handle covers the recess and is inherently capable of deforming when subjected to a force greater than the strength of the material.”

In the “Response to Arguments,” on page 4 of the present Office Action, the Examiner states that claim 1 would be allowable if the following suggested claim language were added: “the deformable covering can deform upon impact with a vehicle occupant without injuring the vehicle occupant.” The Applicants have amended claim 1 to include this suggested limitation.

Accordingly, Applicants submit that claim 1, as amended, and dependent claims 3, 6, 7, 11, and 12 are allowable because they recite elements and limitations that are neither explicitly nor inherently disclosed by the Ford Mustang reference cited by the Examiner.

**Claim Rejections – 35 USC §103:**

Claim 2 is rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over the Ford Mustang. The Examiner states that “[t]he Ford Mustang Convertible does not disclose the claimed size of the surface of the covering.” The Examiner further states that “[i]t would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to form the

latch handles of the 2001 Ford Mustang Convertible with a surface area of 70 square centimetres facing the passenger compartment to enlarge the handles to provide a surface that is easier to grip.”

As discussed above, claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the language suggested by the Examiner in order to place claim 1 in condition for allowance. Accordingly, claim 2 depends from an allowable claim 1 and is allowable for at least the same reason.

**Allowable Subject Matter:**

The Examiner has indicated that claims 4, 5, and 8-10 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the based claim and any intervening claims.


The Applicants thank the Examiner for the indication of allowable subject matter. The Applicants have added new claims 13-20. Claim 13 is an independent claim that includes claim 1 and all of the limitations of objected to claim 4. Claims 14-18 depend from allowable claim 13, and correspond to claims 2, 3, and 6-8, respectively. Claim 19 is an independent claim that includes claim 1 and all of the limitations of objected to claim 9. Claim 20 depends from allowable claim 19 and corresponds to objected to claim 10. Accordingly, claims 13-20 are in condition for allowance.

CONCLUSION

All rejections and objections having been addressed, it is therefore respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance, and a Notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

**Petra Liedmeyer**

By 

Lisa M. Muhleck

Reg. No. 61,710

Date: 6/7/10

QUINN LAW GROUP, PLLC  
39555 Orchard Hill Place, Ste. 520  
Novi, Michigan 48375  
Phone: 248-380-9300  
Fax: 248-380-8968